II Amendment

In the Claims:

Applicant amends claims 1–6, 8–10, 12, 14–15, 17 and 24–26 as set forth below in a listing of all of the claims in the application with an identification of the status of each claim noted parenthetically. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Claim 1. (currently amended) A method for protecting ~~wheat prior to harvest~~ harvested tobacco from microbial attack, comprising the step of applying an antimicrobial composition to the surface of the ~~wheat~~ tobacco, wherein said antimicrobial composition consists essentially of:
(i) benzyl alcohol; and
(ii) propylene glycol.

Claim 2. (currently amended) A method for protecting ~~wheat prior to harvest~~ harvested tobacco from microbial attack, comprising the step of applying an antimicrobial composition to the surface of the ~~wheat~~ tobacco, wherein said composition consists essentially of: (a_l) benzyl alcohol and (b) tannic acid.

Claim 3. (currently amended) A method for protecting ~~wheat prior to harvest~~ harvested tobacco from microbial attack, comprising the step of applying an antimicrobial composition to the surface of the ~~wheat~~ tobacco, wherein said antimicrobial composition consists essentially of benzyl alcohol, propylene glycol and a phenol containing essential oil.

Claim 4. (currently amended) A method for protecting ~~wheat prior to harvest~~ tobacco from microbial attack, comprising the step of applying an antimicrobial composition to the surface of the ~~wheat~~ tobacco, wherein said composition consists essentially of phenylethanol, benzyl alcohol and tannic acid.

Claim 5. (currently amended) A method for protecting ~~wheat prior to harvest~~ tobacco from microbial attack, comprising the step of applying an antimicrobial composition to the surface of the ~~wheat~~ tobacco, wherein said composition consists essentially of propylene glycol and tannic acid.

Claim 6. (currently amended) A method for protecting ~~wheat prior to harvest~~ harvested tobacco from microbial attack, comprising the step of applying an antimicrobial composition to the surface of the ~~wheat~~ tobacco, wherein said antimicrobial composition consists essentially of propylene glycol, tannic acid and lactic acid.

Claim 7. (previously presented) The method according to claim 5, wherein said antimicrobial composition comprises from 0.01 to 50% by weight of tannic acid.

Claim 8. (currently amended) A method for protecting ~~wheat prior to harvest~~ harvested tobacco from microbial attack, comprising the step of applying an antimicrobial composition to the surface of the ~~wheat~~ tobacco, wherein said antimicrobial composition consists essentially of propylene glycol, tannic acid, n-butyl alcohol and iso-butyl alcohol, but no benzyl alcohol and no polyphenol compounds.

Claim 9. (currently amended) A method for protecting ~~wheat prior to harvest~~ harvested tobacco from microbial attack, comprising the step of applying an antimicrobial composition to the surface of the ~~wheat~~ tobacco, wherein said antimicrobial composition consists essentially of propylene glycol, tannic acid and benzyl alcohol.

Claim 10. (currently amended) A method for protecting ~~wheat prior to harvest~~ harvested tobacco from microbial attack, comprising the step of applying an antimicrobial composition to the surface of the ~~wheat~~ tobacco, wherein said composition consists essentially of lactic acid and tannic acid.

Claim 11. (previously presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein said antimicrobial composition comprises from 0.01 to 99% by weight of benzyl alcohol and from 0.01 to 50% by weight of tannic acid.

Claim 12. (currently amended) A method for protecting ~~wheat prior to harvest~~ harvested tobacco from microbial attack, comprising the step of applying an antimicrobial composition to the surface of the ~~wheat~~ tobacco, wherein said antimicrobial composition consists essentially of benzyl alcohol, tannin, tannic acid and rapeseed oil.

Claim 13. (previously presented) The method according to claim 12, wherein said antimicrobial composition comprises:
from 0.1 to 99% by weight of benzyl alcohol,
and from 0.01 to 50% by weight of tannic acid.

Claim 14. (currently amended) A method for protecting ~~harvested tobacco~~ wheat prior to harvest from microbial attack, comprising the step of applying an antimicrobial composition to the surface of the ~~wheat~~ tobacco, wherein said antimicrobial composition consists essentially of benzyl alcohol, tannin, tannic acid and a phenol containing essential oil.

Claim 15. (currently amended) A method for protecting ~~wheat prior to harvest~~ harvested tobacco from microbial attack, comprising the step of applying an antimicrobial composition to the surface of the ~~wheat~~ tobacco, wherein said antimicrobial composition consists essentially of benzyl alcohol, tannin, tannic acid and phenylethanol.

Claim 16. (canceled)

Claim 17. (currently amended) A method for protecting ~~wheat prior to harvest~~ tobacco from microbial attack, comprising the step of applying an antimicrobial composition to the surface of the ~~tobacco~~ wheat, wherein said antimicrobial composition consists essentially of:
from 0.1 to 99% by weight of benzyl alcohol; and
from 0.01 to 50% by weight of tannic acid.

Claims 18–22. (canceled)

Claim 23. (previously presented) The method according to claim 17, wherein said antimicrobial composition consists essentially of from 20 to 98% by weight of benzyl alcohol and from 0.01 to 10% by weight of tannin.

Claim 24. (currently amended) A method for protecting ~~wheat prior to harvest~~ harvested tobacco from microbial attack, comprising the step of applying an antimicrobial composition to the surface of the ~~wheat~~ tobacco, wherein said antimicrobial composition consists essentially of benzyl alcohol, propylene glycol and rapeseed oil.

Claim 25. (currently amended) A method for protecting ~~wheat prior to harvest~~ harvested tobacco from microbial attack, comprising the step of applying an antimicrobial composition to the surface of the ~~wheat~~ tobacco, wherein said antimicrobial composition consists essentially of benzyl alcohol, propylene glycol, rapeseed oil and lactic acid.

Claim 26. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said step of applying said antimicrobial composition to the surface of the ~~wheat~~ tobacco is carried out by spraying.

Claims 27–52. (canceled)